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THE ETHICS OF HOUSEKEEPING.

THE cry is everywhere the same—the badness of our modern servants. But who is really to blame—the mistresses or the maids? the masters or the employed? The one class are educated, the other are comparatively ignorant; and influence filters downwards—it does not permeate the social mass from below. We cast longing looks backward to the bygone times when servants were the humble friends of the family, ready to serve for love and bare maintenance if bad times came, and identifying themselves with the fortunes of their masters. But we forget that we ourselves have changed even more than they, since the days when mistresses overlooked the maids in closer companionship than is warranted now by the conditions of society—when daily details were ordered by the lady, and the execution of her orders was personally supervised—when housekeeping was at once an art and a pleasure, a science and a source of pride. Then young servants were trained immediately under the eye of the mistress and by her direct influence; as now they are trained under the head servant of their special department. And in this change of teachers alone, if no other cause were wanting, we could trace the source of the deterioration complained of.

The lady who, two generations ago, taught the still-room maid the mysteries of sirups and confections, of jams and jellies and dainty sweetmeats—who knew the prime joints, and the signs of good meat, tender poultry, and fresh fish, as well as the cook herself—who could go blindfold to her linen press and pick out the best sheets from the ordinary, and knew by place as well as by touch where the finer huckaback towels were to be found and where the coarser—who could check as well as instruct the housemaid at every turn—such a mistress as this, for her own part diligent, refined, truthful, God-fearing, was likely to give a higher tone, infuse a more faithful and dutiful spirit into her servants, than is possible now, when

the thing is reduced to a profession like any other, and the teacher is only technically, not morally, in advance of the pupil. It is the mistresses who have let the reins slip from their hands, not the maids who have taken the bit between their teeth; or, rather, the latter has been in consequence of the former; and when we blame our servants for the 'heartlessness' of their service—for the ease with which they throw up their situations, on the sole plea of want of change, or of bettering themselves, to the infinite disturbance of things and trouble to the household—we must remember that we ourselves first broke the golden links, and that to expect devotion without giving affection is to expect simply slavishness. The advantage of the present system of mere professional and skilled technicality is to be found in the greater comfort and regularity of the household; in the more finished precision and perfection of the service; in the more complete systemisation of the whole art and practice of attendance. But these gains have been bought with a price—not only in the increased cost of housekeeping, but in the deterioration of the moral character of servants, and in the annihilation of the friendly and quasi-family feeling which once existed between the mistress and her domestics.

In large cities and in the houses of the rich, the upper men-servants are practically their own masters. They make their own stipulations as to hours, food, allowances, liberties; and compound for the nervous exhaustion of perpetual worry which does not include hard work, by a scale of feeding which is more savage than civilised, in the quantity of flesh-meat included. They can make the house pleasant or intolerable to a guest; and in a thousand sly mysterious ways they cause the mistress annoyances which cannot be brought home to them, and of which they enjoy the effect produced. In the kitchen, the cook is absolute mistress, and holds her lady as merely the superscriber of her own *menu* for the day, as well as the bank whence is drawn the money

for the bills—which she pays. And in the payment of those bills, as well as in dealing with remnants—of which woe betide the mistress who should recommend the home consumption!—the cook doubles and trebles her wages, and feathers her own nest with the down plucked from her employers. Can we wonder at this? We put a half-educated person into a place of trust and temptation; we neither check nor overlook her; we trust all to her abstract honesty and sense of justice; there is no danger of discovery, still less of punishment; she has before her the additional temptation of pleasing her fellow-servants with whom she lives in hourly contact, rather than of saving the pockets of her rich employers whom she scarcely knows and rarely sees; and then we lift up our hands at the depravity of human nature, when we find that the tradesmen give back a percentage on their bills, and that whole pounds of wax candles swell the perquisite of the grease-pot handsomely. But next door, the rich merchant is a fraudulent bankrupt; the respectable family lawyer over the way absconds after having dealt with his clients' securities; master's friend, the banker, puts up the shutters to the ruin of thousands on thousands, while his wife has a secured jointure which enables them to live in princely style; and the stock-jobber, who dines with us on Sundays, makes use of private information to sell to his best friend shares which, up to their highest point to-day, he knows will collapse like a burst balloon to-morrow. Are we not a little hard on the kitchen, seeing what is done in the parlour?

Go from the rich to the poor among our gentry—from the gilded upper stratum to the lower base and barren subsoil—and here again we find that mistresses are as much to blame as the maids, whose shortcomings they bewail and resent. In a household of this kind, the *res angusta domi* prevents the hiring, because rendering impossible the payment, of good and well-trained servants; and the mistress has to be content with young girls whom she must teach, and whose untutored services she buys at small cost. But here, again, the modern spirit of the age spoils what else might seem to be a return to old and wholesome conditions. Nine times out of ten, the mistress is as incapable of teaching as the maid is slow of learning; for we must remember that untrained girls of this sort are generally taken from the most humble class, and that they come into service with but little natural brightness of wit and less educational sharpening. The mistress expects too much from them. For the most part aching under her own burden, disliking her duties, and envying her richer sisters, she does the least she can in the house, and gives the heavy end of the stick to the hired help. And, forgetful of the maxim of 'line upon line and precept upon precept,' and of the necessity of reiteration, patient and continual, if a dull brain has to be impressed and a new method learned, she is impatient and angry when orders are forgotten—ways of doing things bungled—and chaos, disorder, and confusion are the result. Perhaps she herself is unpunctual and inexact; but she expects from her seventeen-old little Betty the punctuality of the sun and the regularity of the clock. Perhaps she herself is

undutiful, and shirks all that she can transfer on to another's hands; but she looks for devotion, self-sacrifice, the unflinching performance of her duty, from this comparative child, and feels entitled to sit in the seat of the judge, when these virtues run dry and the shallow stream of conscientiousness fails. From the nurse-girl, herself a mere child, hired to wheel the perambulator and look after the children, she expects such patience, forbearance, and understanding of child-nature, as she herself, mother as she is, cannot command. If Jacky is rude and Jenny is rebellious, if Tommy is unmanageable and Katie is defiant, she, the mother, whose temper would be in a blaze on the moment, demands that the nursemaid shall bear all with a calm and equable mind, and, without the power of punishing, be able to reduce to obedience these little rebels, whom she herself cannot always control with the help of the rod and the dark-closet to boot. Furthermore, she lays the blame of these naughty tempers on the girl, to excuse the children. They are always good with *her*, she says angrily, and it must be Mary's fault that they are so often tiresome when *she* has them. And when she says this, she does not remember the old adage about the little pitchers and long ears, and never realises the fact that by her own words she gives the children their cue, and encourages them to be rude to one who, they know beforehand, will be made the scapegoat for their sins. That overpowering maternal love—that *storge*, of which poets make so much account, and which is the primal necessity for the preservation of the race—is at times the cause of great injustice, especially when dealing with those unprotected young nursemaids to whom no authority can be given, from whom all controlling influence is expected, and who have neither moral force nor mental enlightenment enough to control themselves, still less others. If they stand in the attitude of accusers, the mother rejects them as traducers.

Sometimes, in small households, the master interferes like a woman, and adds to the confusion by putting his masculine fingers into the already over-stocked domestic pie. There are men who are simply maddening in a house. They watch behind the window-blind and count the number of seconds Betty gives to the baker's boy, and how she smirks and smiles at the handsome young greengrocer or the smart Mr Butcher. That Betty should have any pleasure in the gallant words or flattering looks of one or all of these, seems to them a sin, a dereliction of duty, and, in some queer way, a wrong and a robbery done to them. For were they to be completely candid, most masters and mistresses would say that they expected the whole of a servant's nature to be given to them—all her thoughts as well as her abilities—all her interests as well as all her time; and that to fall in love is a kind of petty treason and a quasi-dishonest transfer of energy. Put in this crude way, this theorem would be denied; and a dozen other reasons would be given for the confessed dislike felt by employers for a love-sick maid. Reduced to its elements, it would come to what we have said—impatience of the inevitable troubler of the conditions being one of the proofs on our side. In matters of this kind, the 'molly-man,' who

stays at home, peeps from behind the blind and puts his fingers into all the pies aboard, is a harsher and less sympathetic person to deal with than is the average mistress, to whom a girl's love affairs carry an echo that awakens old dreams in her own soul and gain a little compassion for the sufferer. For, after all, Betty's love for the baker's young man is very much the same kind of thing as Ada's for the captain and Mabel's for the curate; and neither the cut nor the material of the gown influences the beating of the heart which throbs beneath!

In all this, as we had occasion in a recent paper to observe, we do not excuse the faulty side of modern servants, but we should like to see inaugurated a better method of dealing with it. We should like to see the mistresses go back to the old friendly feeling and friendly intercourse with those who live under their roof, and make their happiness, by the conscientious discharge of duty—that old friendly feeling which made of the household one family, and brought the servants in line with the masters by the golden cord of human sympathy. People say that this is impossible; that the spirit of the age prevents it; that servants themselves refuse to recognise anything like personal interest from their employers; that the whole tone and character of service are changed, and that it is now only a profession, where the employed live under the roof of their employers, instead of out of the house, as with mill-hands and the like. It may be so; but if even so, we contend that the higher natures could influence the lower if they would; that knowledge could direct ignorance; and that it depends on the masters and mistresses to get good out of these changed conditions—human nature, on the whole, seeking the light, and society, like a broken crystal, mending its fractures with fresh material, to the maintenance of form and beauty.

IN ALL SHADES.

BY GRANT ALLEN,

AUTHOR OF 'BABYLON,' 'STRANGE STORIES,' ETC. ETC.

CHAPTER VII.

THE morning when Edward and Marian were to start on their voyage to Trinidad, with Nora in their charge, was a beautifully clear, calm, and sunny one. The tiny steam-tender that took them down Southampton Water, from the landing-stage to the moorings where the big ocean-going *Severn* lay at anchor, ploughed her way merrily through the blue ripples that hardly broke the level surface. Though it was a day of parting, nobody was over-sad. General Ord had come down with Marian, his face bronzed with twenty years of India, but straight and erect still like a hop-pole, as he stood with his tall thin figure lithe and steadfast on the little quarter-deck. Mrs Ord was there too, crying a little, of course, as is only decorous on such occasions, yet not more so than a parting always demands from the facile eyes of female humanity. Marian didn't cry much, either; she felt so safe in going with Edward, and hoped to be back so soon again on a summer visit to her father and mother. As for Nora, Nora was always bright as the sunshine,

and could never see anything except the bright side of things. 'We shall take such care of dear Marian in Trinidad, Mrs Ord!' she said gaily. 'You'll see her home again on a visit in another twelvemonth, with more roses on her cheek than she's got now, when she's had a taste of our delicious West Indian mountain air.'

'And if Trinidad suits Miss Ord—Mrs Hawthorn, I mean—dear me, how stupid of me!' Harry Noel put in quietly, 'half as well as it seems to have suited you, Miss Dupuy, we shall have no cause to complain of Hawthorn for having taken her out there.'

'Oh, no fear of that,' Nora answered, smiling one of her delicious childish smiles. 'You don't know how delightful Trinidad is, Mr Noel; it's really one of the most charming places in all Christendom.'

'On your recommendation, then,' Harry answered, bowing slightly and looking at her with eyes full of meaning, 'I shall almost be tempted to go out some day and see for myself how really delightful are these poetical tropics of yours.'

Nora blushed, and her eyes fell slightly. 'You would find them very lovely, no doubt, Mr Noel,' she answered, more demurely and in a half-timid fashion; 'but I can't recommend them, you know, with any confidence, because I was such a very little girl when I first came home to England. You had better not come out to Trinidad merely on the strength of my recommendation.'

Harry bowed his head again gravely. 'As you will,' he said. 'Your word is law. And yet, perhaps some day, I shouldn't be surprised if Hawthorn and Mrs Hawthorn were to find me dropping in upon them unexpectedly for a scratch dinner. After all, it's a mere nothing nowadays to run across the millpond, as the Yankees call it.'

They reached the *Severn* about an hour before the time fixed for starting, and sat on deck talking together with that curious sense of finding nothing to say which always oppresses one on the eve of a long parting. It seems as though no subject of conversation sufficiently important for the magnitude of the occasion ever occurred to one: the mere everyday trivialities of ordinary talk sound out of place at such a serious moment. So, by way of something to do, the party soon began to institute a series of observations upon Edward and Marian's fellow-passengers, as they came on board, one after another, in successive batches on the little tender.

'Just look at that brown young man!' Nora cried, in a suppressed whisper, as a tall and gentlemanly looking mulatto walked up the gangway from the puffing tug. 'We shall be positively overwhelmed with coloured people, I declare! There are three Hotentot Venuses down in the saloon already, bound for Haiti; and a San Domingo general, as black as your hat; and a couple of walnut-coloured old gentlemen going to Dominica. And now, here's another regular brown man coming on board to us. What's his name, I wonder? Oh, there it is, painted as large as life upon his portmanteau! "Dr Whitaker, Trinidad." Why, my dear, he's actually going the whole way with us. And a doctor too! goodness gracious. Just fancy being attended through fever by a man of that complexion!'

'Oh, hush, Nora!' Marian cried, in genuine alarm. 'He'll overhear you, and you'll hurt his feelings. Besides, you oughtn't to talk so about other people, whether they hear you or whether they don't.'

'Hurt his feelings, my dear! O dear, no, not a bit of it. I know them better than you do. My dear Marian, these people haven't got any feelings; they've been too much accustomed to be laughed at from the time they were babies, ever to have had the chance of acquiring any.'

'Then the more shame,' Edward interrupted gravely, 'to those who have laughed them out of all self-respect and natural feeling. But I don't believe, for my part, there's anybody on earth who doesn't feel hurt at being ridiculed.'

'Ah, that's so nice of you to think and talk like that, Mr Hawthorn,' Nora answered frankly; 'but you won't think so, you know, I'm quite certain, after you've been a month or two on shore over in Trinidad.'

'Good-morning, ladies and gentlemen,' the captain of the *Severn* put in briskly, walking up to them as they lounged in a group on the clean-scrubbed quarter-deck—'good-morning, ladies and gentlemen. Fine weather to start on a voyage. Are you all going with us?—Why, bless my heart, if this isn't General Ord! I sailed with you, sir, fifteen years ago now or more, must be, when I was a second officer in the P. and O. service.—You don't remember me; no, I daresay not; I was only a second officer then, and you sat at the captain's table. But I remember you, sir—I remember you. There's more folks know Tom Fool, the proverb says, than Tom Fool knows; and no offence meant, general, nor none be taken. And so you're going out with us now, are you?—going out with us now? Well, you'll sit at the captain's table still, sir, no doubt, you and your party; and as I'm the captain now, you see, why, I shall have a better chance than I used to have of making your acquaintance.'

The captain laughed heartily as he spoke at his own small wit; but General Ord drew himself up rather stiffly, and answered in a somewhat severe tone: 'No, I'm not going out with you this journey myself; but my daughter, who has lately married, and her husband here, are just setting out to their new home over in Trinidad.'

'In Trinidad,' the jolly captain echoed heartily—'in Trinidad! Well, well, beautiful island, beautiful, beautiful! Must mind they don't take too much mainsheet, or catch yellow Jack, or live in the marshes, that's all; otherwise, they'll find it a delightful residence. I took out a young sub-lieutenant, just gazetted, last voyage but two, when they had the yellow Jack awfully bad up at cantonments. He was in a deadly funk of the fever all the way, and always asking everybody questions about it. The moment he landed, who does he go and meet but an old Irish friend of the family, who was going home by the return steamer. The Irishman rushes up to him and shakes his hand violently and says he—"Me dear fellow," says he, "ye've come in the very nick of time. Promotion's certain; they're dying by thousands. Every day, wan of 'em drops off the list; and all ye've got to

do is to hould yer head up, keep from drinking any brandy, and don't be frightened; and, be George, ye'll rise in no time as fast as I have; and I'm going home this morning a colonel."

The general shuddered slightly. 'Not a pleasant introduction to the country, certainly,' he answered in his driest manner. 'But I suppose Trinidad's fairly healthy at present!'

'Healthy! Well, yes, well enough as the tropics go, general.—But don't you be afraid of your young people. With health and strength, they'll pull through decently, not a doubt of it.—Let me see—let me see; I must secure 'em a place at my own table. We've got rather an odd lot of passengers this time, mostly; a good many of 'em have got a very decided touch of the tar-brush about 'em—a touch of the tar-brush. There's that woolly-headed nigger fellow over there who's just come aboard; he's going to Trinidad too; he's a doctor, he is. We musn't let your people get mixed up with all that lot, of course; I'll keep 'em a place nice and snug at my own table.'

'Thank you,' the general said, rather more graciously than before.—'This is my daughter, captain, Mrs Hawthorn. And this is my son-in-law, Mr Edward Hawthorn, who's going out to accept a district judgeship over yonder in Trinidad.'

'Ha!' the jovial captain answered in his bluff voice, doffing his hat sailor-fashion to Marian and Edward. 'Going to hang up the niggers out in Trinidad, are you, sir? Going to hang up the niggers! Well, well, they deserve it all, every man-Jack of 'em, the lazy beggars; they all deserve hanging. A pestering set of idle, thieving, hulking vagabonds, as ever came around to coal a ship in harbour! I'd judge 'em, I would—I'd judge 'em.' And the captain pantomimically expressed the exact nature of his judicial sentiments by pressing his own stout bull-neck, just across the windpipe, with his sturdy right hand, till his red and sunburnt face grew even redder and redder with the suggested suspension.

Edward smiled quietly, but answered nothing.

'Well, sir,' the captain went on as soon as he had recovered fully from the temporary effects of his self-inflicted strangulation, 'and have you ever been in the West Indies before, or is this your first visit?'

'I was born there,' Edward answered. 'I'm a Trinidad man by birth; but I've lived so long in England, and went there so young, that I don't really recollect very much about my native country.'

'Mr Hawthorn's father you may know by name,' the general said, a little assertively. 'He is a son of the Honourable James Hawthorn, of Aqualta Estate, Trinidad.'

The captain drew back for a moment with a curious look, and scanned Edward closely from head to foot with a remarkably frank and maritime scrutiny; then he whistled low to himself for a few seconds, and seemed to be ruminating inwardly upon some very amusing and unusual circumstance. At last he answered slowly, in a more reserved and somewhat embarrassed tone: 'O yes, I know Mr Hawthorn of Aqualta—know him personally; well-known man, Mr Hawthorn of Aqualta. Member of the Legislative Council

of the island. Fine estate, Agualta—very fine estate indeed, and has one of the largest outputs of rum and sugar anywhere in the whole West Indies.

'I told you so,' Harry Noel murmured parenthetically. 'The governor is coiny. They're all alike, the whole breed of them. Secretiveness large, acquisitiveness enormous, benevolence and generosity absolutely undeveloped. When you get to Trinidad, my dear Teddy, bleed him, bleed him!'

'Well, well, Mrs Hawthorn,' the captain said gallantly to Marian, who stood by rather wondering what his sudden change of demeanour could possibly portend, 'you shall have a seat at my table—certainly, certainly; you shall have a seat at my table. The general's an old passenger of mine on the P. and O.; and I've known Mr Hawthorn of Agualta Estate ever since I first came upon the West India liners.—And the young lady, is she going too?' For Captain Burford, like most others of his craft, had a quick eye for pretty faces, and he had not been long in picking out and noticing Nora's.

'This is Miss Dupuy of Orange Grove,' Marian said, drawing her young companion a little forward. 'Perhaps you know her father too, as you've been going so long to the island.'

'What! a daughter of Mr Theodore Dupuy of Orange Grove and Pimento Valley,' the captain replied briskly. 'Mr Theodore Dupuy's daughter! Lord bless my soul, Mr Theodore Dupuy! O yes, don't I just know him! Why, Mr Dupuy's one of the most respected and well-known gentlemen in the whole island. Been settled at Orange Grove, the Dupuys have, ever since the old Spanish occupation.—And so you're taking out Mr Theodore Dupuy's daughter, are you, Mrs Hawthorn? Well, well! Taking out Mr—Theodore Dupuy's daughter. That's a capital joke, that is.—O yes, you must all sit at the head of my table, ladies; and I'll do everything that lies in my power to make you comfortable.'

Meanwhile, Edward and Harry Noel had strolled off for a minute towards the opposite end of the deck, where the mulatto gentleman was standing quite alone, looking down steadily into the deep-blue motionless water. As the captain moved away, Nora Dupuy gave a little start, and caught Marian Hawthorn's arm excitedly and suddenly. 'Look there!' she cried—'oh, look there, Marian! Do you see Mr Hawthorn? Do you see what he's doing? That brown man over there, with the name on the portmanteau, has turned round and spoken to him, and Mr Hawthorn's actually held out his hand and is shaking hands with him!'

'Well,' Marian answered in some surprise, 'I see he is. Why not?'

'Why not? My dear, how can you ask me such a question! Why, of course, because the man's a regular mulatto—a coloured person.'

Marian laughed. 'Really, dear,' she answered, more amused than angry, 'you mustn't be so entirely filled up with your foolish little West Indian prejudices. The young man's a doctor, and no doubt a gentleman in education and breeding, and, for my part, I can't for the life of me see why one shouldn't shake hands with him as well as with any other respectable person.'

'Oh, but Marian, you know—a brown man!—his father and mother!—the associations—no, really!'

Marian smiled again. 'They're coming this way,' she said; 'we shall soon hear what they're talking about. Perhaps he knows something about your people, or Edward's.'

Nora looked up quite defiant. 'About my people, Marian!' she said almost angrily. 'Why, what can you be thinking of! You don't suppose, do you, that my people are in the habit of mixing casually with woolly-headed mulattoes?'

She had hardly uttered the harsh words, when the mulatto gentleman walked over towards them side by side with Edward Hawthorn, and lifted his hat courteously to Marian.

'My wife,' Edward said, as Marian bowed slightly in return: 'Dr Whitaker.'

'I saw your husband's name upon his boxes, Mrs Hawthorn,' the mulatto gentleman said with a pleasant smile, and in a soft, clear, cultivated voice; 'and as my father has the privilege of knowing Mr Hawthorn of Agualta, over in Trinidad, I took the liberty of introducing myself at once to him. I'm glad to hear that we're to be fellow-passengers together, and that your husband has really decided to return at last to his native island.'

'Thank you,' Marian answered simply. 'We are all looking forward much to our life in Trinidad.' Then, with a little mischievous twinkle in her eye, she turned to Nora. 'This is another of our fellow-passengers, Dr Whitaker,' she said demurely—'my friend, Miss Dupuy, whom I'm taking out under my charge—another Trinidadian: you ought to know one another. Miss Dupuy's father lives at an estate called Orange Grove—isn't it, Nora?'

The mulatto doctor lifted his hat again, and bowed with marked politeness to the blushing white girl. For a second, their eyes met. Dr Whitaker's looked at the beautiful half-childish face with unmistakable instantaneous admiration. Nora's flashed a little angrily, and her nostrils dilated with a proud quiver; but she said never a word; she merely gave a chilly bow, and didn't attempt even to offer her pretty little gloved hand to the brown stranger.

'I have heard of Miss Dupuy's family by name,' the mulatto answered, speaking to Marian, but looking askance at the same time toward the petulant Nora. 'Mr Dupuy of Orange Grove is well known throughout the island. I am glad that we are going to have so much delightful Trinidad society on our outward passage.'

'Thank him for nothing,' Nora murmured aside to Harry Noel, moving away as she spoke towards Mrs Ord at the other end of the vessel. 'What impertinence! Marian ought to have known better than to introduce me to him.'

'It's a pity you don't like the coloured gentleman,' Harry Noel put in provokingly. 'The appreciation is unfortunately not mutual, it seems. He appeared to me to be very much struck with you at first sight, Miss Dupuy, to judge by his manner.'

Nora turned towards him with a sudden fierceness and haughtiness that fairly surprised the easy-going young barrister. 'Mr Noel,' she said in a tone of angry but suppressed indignation, 'how dare you speak to me so about that negro

fellow, sir—how dare you? How dare you mention him and me in the same breath together? How dare you presume to joke with me on such a subject? Don't speak to me again, pray. You don't know what we West Indians are, or you'd never have ventured to utter such a speech as that to any woman with a single drop of West Indian blood in her whole body.

Harry bowed silently and bit his lip; then, without another word, he moved back slowly toward the other group, and allowed Nora to join Mrs Ord by the door of the companion-ladder.

In twenty minutes more, the first warning bell rang for those who were going ashore, to get ready for their departure. There was the usual hurried leave-taking on every side; there was the usual amount of shedding of tears; there was the usual shouting and bawling, and snorting and puffing; and there was the usual calm indifference of the ship's officers, moving up and down through all the tearful valedictory groups, as through an ordinary incident of humanity, experienced regularly every six weeks of a whole lifetime. As Marian and her mother were taking their last farewells, Harry Noel ventured once more timidly to approach Nora Dupuy and address a few parting words to her in a low undertone.

'I'm sorry I offended you unintentionally just now, Miss Dupuy,' he said quietly. 'I thought the best apology I could offer at the moment was to say nothing just then in exculpation. But I really didn't mean to hurt your feelings, and I hope we still part friends.'

Nora held out her small hand to him a trifle reluctantly. 'As you have the grace to apologise,' she said, 'I shall overlook it. Yes, we part friends, Mr Noel; I have no reason to part otherwise.'

'Then there's no chance for me?' Harry asked in a low tone, looking straight into her eyes with a searching glance.

'No chance,' Nora echoed, dropping her eyes suddenly, but speaking very decidedly. 'You must go now, Mr Noel; the second bell's ringing.'

Harry took her hand once more, and pressed it faintly. 'Good-bye, Miss Dupuy,' he said—'good-bye—for the present. I daresay we shall meet again before long, some day—in Trinidad.'

'O no!' Nora cried in a low voice, as he turned to leave her. 'Don't do that, Mr Noel; don't come out to Trinidad. I told you it'd be quite useless.'

Harry laughed one of his most teasing laughs. 'My father has property in the West Indies, Miss Dupuy,' he answered in his usual voice of light badinage, paying her out in her own coin; 'and I shall probably come over some day to see how the niggers are getting on upon it—that was all I meant. Good-bye—good-bye to you.'

But his eyes belied what he said, and Nora knew they did as she saw him look back a last farewell from the deck of the retreating little tender.

'Any more for the shore—any more for the shore!' cried the big sailor who rang the bell. 'No more.—Then shove off, cap'n'—to the skipper of the tug-boat.

In another minute, the great anchor was heaved, and the big screw began to revolve slowly through

the sluggish water. Next moment, the ship moved from her moorings and was fairly under weigh. Just as she moved, a boat with a telegraph-boy on board rowed up rapidly to her side, and a voice from the boat shouted aloud in a sailor's bass: '*Severn*, ahoy!'

'Ahoy!' answered the ship's officer.

'Passenger aboard by the name of Hawthorn? We've got a telegram for him.'

Edward rushed quickly to the ship's side, and answered in his loudest voice: 'Yes. Here I am.'

'Passenger aboard by the name of Miss Dupuy? We've got a telegram for her.'

'This is she,' Edward answered. 'How can we get them?'

'Lower a bucket,' the ship's officer shouted to a sailor.—'You can put 'em in that, boy, can't you?'

The men in the boat caught the bucket, and fastened in the letters rudely with a stone taken from the ballast at the bottom. The screw still continued to revolve as the sailors drew up the bucket hastily. A little water got over the side and wet the telegrams; but they were both still perfectly legible. Edward unfolded his in wondering silence, while Marian looked tremulously over his right shoulder. It contained just these few short words:

'From HAWTHORN, *Trinidad*, to HAWTHORN, R.M.S. *Severn*, *Southampton*.—For God's sake, don't come out. Reasons by letter.'

Marian gazed at it for a moment in speechless surprise; then she turned, pale and white, to her husband beside her. 'O Edward,' she cried, looking up at him with a face of terror, 'what on earth can it mean? What on earth can they wish us not to come out for?'

Edward held the telegram open before his eyes, gazing at it blankly in inexpressible astonishment. 'My darling,' he said, 'my own darling, I haven't the very remotest notion. I can't imagine why on earth they should ever wish to keep us away from them.'

At the same moment, Nora held her own telegram out to Marian with a little laugh of surprise and amusement. Marian glanced at it and read it hastily. It ran as follows:

'From DUPUY, *Trinidad*, to MISS DUPUY, R.M.S. *Severn*, *Southampton*.—Don't come out till next steamer. On no account go on board the *Severn*.'

TWO EVENINGS WITH BISMARCK.

IN TWO PARTS.—PART II.

ANOTHER week has elapsed. The month of May has arrived in all its glory and beauty. The magnificent trees in the park of the Diet House form a leafy arched avenue, and amid the branches of the venerable six hundred year old yew-tree, beneath which Mendelssohn composed the overture to his *Midsummer Night's Dream*, feathered songsters of every kind hold their gay revels. The spring, that wonderful season of longing and restless desire, is, as usual, warring successfully against the stern duties of the members of parliament. Even the hardest workers among them, Prince Albrecht of Prussia, Moltke, and Steinmetz, ay, even those most persevering of deputies, Wachler and Count Rennard, can no longer remain indoors. The outcry about the

bad ventilation of the House is only a pretext to cover their retreat with honour, and all gradually assemble beneath the giant yew, there to listen to the gay tales and rare bits of scandal with which Hennig and Unruh regale the assembly. Last year, when, during the intense heat, we sat out here in the cool *pavillon*, discussing the wine duties with the help of some bottles of rare old Rhenish, President Simson had a large telegraphic bell placed on the top of the kiosk, which by its sudden peal so startled our unconscious souls, like the voice of the last trumpet, that it completely scared away the god Bacchus from these precincts for ever.

It was therefore with intense relief that all looked forward to the legitimate parliamentary recreation of the week, Prince Bismarck's Saturday evening. This time, no constables were visible. Immediately on entering the first reception room up-stairs, we saluted his lady, and were welcomed by Bismarck himself, who at once entered into conversation with us, only stopping occasionally to shake hands with some fresh arrival. The crush gradually began to lessen as the visitors dispersed into the various rooms. We were still standing in the anteroom, near the great sideboard; the moment seemed favourable for ascertaining the meaning of the stuffed hare; I therefore asked Bismarck why it was placed there.

'Oh, have you not noticed that this hare is brunette?'

'Brunette?'

'Yes. Look here—he has a dark-brown head and back, whereas he ought by rights to be yellow. I ought to place an ordinary hare beside him to show off this natural curiosity. He was the only "brunette" hare among the fifteen hundred we killed that day.'

Most of the guests had gone to the billiard-room. There were not so many present on this Saturday evening; a festival in commemoration of the foundation of the Law Union had drawn nearly all the legal celebrities of the House to Charlottenburg.

But what interested me most was Bismarck's own room, the door of which stood open.

'May one enter?' I ask of one of the house-servants.

'Certainly, sir,' is the reply.

And crossing the threshold, I glance round the room. In the centre, though somewhat nearer the two windows that lead on to the terrace, stands Bismarck's writing-table, a sort of long desk, provided on each side with open pigeon-holes. The chair, without any lean, is a large round seat of massive oak, which turns either way. On the right-hand side are the shelves that hold the public documents. There were none there now, but on the floor below lay several locked portfolios. The light falls from the left, gently softened by white and crimson silk curtains. Innumerable white gloves, and swords enough to arm a whole division of generals, are piled up on a table facing the door through which we entered. On the *escritoire* beside it, the Chancellor's various civil, military, and official head-coverings form quite a small exhibition. The other half of the wall is completely filled up by a couch of colossal dimensions, covered with blue brocade. It is almost as broad as it is long, without back or side cushions, only at the head a

round bolster is placed, on which reposes an embroidered cushion with this inscription: 'In Memory of the Year 1866.'

The pictures on the walls consist of life-size engravings, portraits of the great *Kurfürst* Frederick the Great, Frederick-William III., and King William. Beside this latter hangs an engraving of Murillo's Madonna, looking somewhat surprised at her worldly companions. Finally, on the wall behind the writing-table hangs a charming Swiss cuckoo-clock; while just below the portrait of Frederick the Great, and so placed that Bismarck can see it when he reposes on the couch, hangs a small picture of his mother, whose memory, as is well known, he treasures above everything else. Even taken from the simple stand-point of man to man, it is satisfactory to find, by the various letters from among his private papers that have of late years been made public, such a fund of kindly feeling, such a bright and hearty nature, as one would hardly have looked for in this daring and indomitable combatant.

'In spite of all the hunting and raking-up of anecdotes of Bismarck's past life,' said a Saxon deputy, 'that has been going on now for some years both by Sunday and week-day sportsmen, from the big journals down to the tiny pamphlets, not one half of what he has really done, said, and written, will ever be collected together; while those who are at all honest will frankly admit that it would be impossible to reproduce faithfully the peculiar form and fresh originality of his sayings. Thus, I heard rather a characteristic anecdote of his meeting with Councillor P—, from the Saxon town of M—, at the Berlin Railway Station in Leipzig. Bismarck—it was in 1863—had been with the king in Carlsbad, and was travelling back to Berlin, via Leipzig, in strict incognito. It was noon, and there was more than an hour to wait before the next train started. Our friend Councillor P—, who had been told by the station-master who his travelling companion was, went into the reserved dining saloon—Bismarck did the same—and soon the two merged into amicable converse, while discussing their respective luncheons. Bismarck praised the beauty of Saxony and the bravery and industry of its people. Councillor P—, who did not belong to the blind worshippers of Herr von Beust, asked his *vis-à-vis* what he thought of the Saxon government and policy. His *vis-à-vis* continued his panegyric. P—, determined not to be outdone, launched forth into raptures about Prussia—not, however, including the Berliners.

"Well, you are quite right," said Bismarck. "I daresay you have heard the story of the Alpine host, who, after pointing out the glories of his native land, asked a Berlin youth whether they had such mountains as that in Berlin. 'No,' he replied; 'we have not got such mountains; but if we had, they would be far finer than these!' Much the same thing happened to me. I was living in Hanover for some time, and one day I went, with a friend from Berlin, along the beautiful Herrenhauser Allee. 'Look at those magnificent trees!' I said. 'Where?' was the answer, as he looked round with contempt. 'You mean *these*? Why, they are not to be compared to the Linden of Berlin!' The following year,

I walked with my friend Unter den Linden. They had their usual summer aspect, which, as I daresay you all know, is sufficiently dreary and melancholy. 'Well, what say you now?' I asked my companion. 'Do you still maintain that this is superior to the Herrenhauser Allee?' 'Oh, leave me in peace with your Herrenhausers and Allees,' he cried testily; 'it always makes me savage when I am shown anything better than we have in Berlin.' There you have a true picture of the Berliner."

'Bismarck then went on discussing the lower classes in Berlin, especially the porters, and lamented that it was found almost impossible to make them trustworthy. "You should do the same as we do," replied the councillor—"swear the men in before they take service."

"Oh," replied Bismarck, laughing, "that would not hold water with us."

'Meanwhile, the doors of the reserved dining-room were thrown open to the great travelling public, who began to assemble preparatory to the starting of the train. Among others, the well-known Leipzig *colporteur*, Hartwig, utilised the moments to find a fresh market for his wares. He had evidently also another motive—which he kept out of sight—and that was to give the Prussian minister some unvarnished truths and a piece of his mind about his political views, for of course he knew Bismarck by sight.'

Now first I noticed the gigantic size of the bearskin that lay beneath the billiard-table—it is almost as long as the table itself. Bismarck shot the animal in Russia, after having watched and waited for it five nights running.

The mighty Nimrod now joined our party, and leant up against the billiard-table while talking. He then sat down on the table, and while keeping up a lively conversation with Hennig and the rest of us about various points on the interior economy of the Diet, he every now and then threw a billiard ball behind him, so that each time it hit the two others that were on the table. After the discussion had lasted some time, Bismarck said: 'But come, gentlemen; I think it is time we had some refreshment.' So saying, he led the way, and we again passed through the chamber with the yellow Gobelins, full of Chinese figures, animals, and pagodas, on to the dining saloon. On our way, we passed Deputy Kratz in deep confab with General von Steinmetz. They were still continuing the discussion on the theory of light, with which the worthy judge and the victor of Trautenuau had entertained the House for over an hour a few days ago.

Close beside them stood the Hessian deputy Braun, talking to Admiral Jachmann. It is incredible what an inordinate desire this inland resident, who has never even heard the sound of the sea, has for occupying himself with naval matters. Perhaps these constant discussions with landmen, who cannot know much of nautical affairs, are the cause of the somewhat stereotyped smile that curves the worthy admiral's otherwise handsome lips. This time, however, he did not smile. Braun had asked him the following simple but weighty question: 'The papers and telegraphs have just informed us of the arrival at Kiel, from England, of the *König Wilhelm*, the largest armour-

plated ship of the North German navy. They write in such a cool, indifferent sort of manner, as if it were quite an everyday affair for us to pay out over three million dollars for such a vessel. Has Your Excellency already inspected the vessel?' 'No; I will do so tomorrow.' And with this answer the deputy had to be satisfied.

As I passed on, I again came across Bismarck, this time in conversation with Albrecht, the town recorder of Hanover, who in the previous year had had a sharp tussle about his right to the ox with which the guild of butchers have, from time immemorial, every year presented the recorder. The much-vexed question, *re* the ox, was happily not now in dispute, Albrecht having manfully fought for and gained his cause. But the point under discussion was evidently nearly as delicate and intricate, for I heard Bismarck say: 'Well, both you and I have lost some hair—we have therefore *one* very important point in common—and ought to understand one another all the better.'

The table in the dining saloon was again covered with all the cold delicacies of a true North German kitchen; and again, like last Saturday, a small side-table had been taken possession of by some of the deputies, among whom I noticed the gentlemanly police superintendent Devens of Cologne; the two noble sons of the soil, Evelt and Hosius; and the honest but somewhat moody Günther of Saxony.

Ere long, Bismarck came up and seated himself between Devens and Evelt, chatting pleasantly with them, while enjoying the cool and fragrant *Maitrank*.

'How do you like my *Maitrank*?' he asked.

'It is perfect, Your Excellency!'

'Yes; I rather pride myself on it. Curiously enough, during all my student days I never found any *Waldmeister* further south than Heidelberg. Our South German brethren were first initiated into the delights of the *Maitrank* by us northerners. You from Hohenzollern, for instance, have no *Waldmeister*, I suppose?'

'O yes, Your Excellency,' replied Evelt. 'It grows splendidly with us. But I also may lay claim to the honour of having introduced the Swabians to its magic powers.'

'You have to thank your sterile Alps for that,' returned Bismarck. 'Were they more sheltered, no *Waldmeister* would grow there.'

A group of deputies and several waiters with plates and glasses now separated me from the speakers. When I again rejoined the party, Bismarck was telling them the following story of General von Strotha: 'He was at that time living quietly at Frankfort, in command of the allied garrison there, when one day he received a telegram from the then Minister President, Count von Brandenburg, to come at once to Berlin and report himself to the minister. Strotha starts for Berlin in hot haste, and thence immediately goes to Brandenburg.'

'I have sent for Your Excellency to ask you to become War Minister,' said Brandenburg.

'Me!' exclaimed Strotha. 'For heaven's sake, Your Excellency, what made you think of such a thing? I am not in any way fitted for the post.'

'I am afraid that can't be helped. See; here

is the order from His Majesty the king, requiring that you shall be War Minister."

"Strotha reads the order, looking greatly troubled, and then says: "Of course, if His Majesty commands, I must obey."

"Well, then, my dear colleague," continues Brandenburg, "you will attend the cabinet council at ten to-day."

"Oh, I could not possibly do that."

"I am afraid you will have to. See; here is another order from His Majesty, expressly desiring you to undertake the War Department in the cabinet."

"Then I must of course obey," said the new War Minister, with a deep sigh of dejection.

"He is just about to leave, in order to prepare himself for his presumable maiden speech, when Brandenburg stops him: "I suppose you know, general, that you must appear in *mufti* [plain clothes] at the council?"

"Strotha stood speechless with amazement. This was the finishing stroke. "I have none!" he at last managed to stammer forth.

"Well, you will have to get yourself some by ten o'clock—such are the king's commands."

"Then of course I must obey," replied Strotha, leaving the room in a very crestfallen manner.

"But he faced his difficulty valiantly. Jumping into a cab, he drove off to the Mülhendamm, where all the old Jews congregate; and at ten o'clock precisely, a strange figure, with an enormously high collar and coat sleeves hanging right over his hands, was seated at the ministerial table—this was the new War Minister!"

Günther, who never could hide what he felt, and who generally looked at the dark side of most things, had followed the Chancellor's story with undisguised amusement. The circle became every moment more gay and lively.

"Take care, Günther," cried Mosig von Ahrenberg, holding up his finger in mock-threat; "I see plainly that Bismarck has completely bewitched you. I shall feel bound to make your apostasy known to a certain paper in Leipzig."

Whilst this merry chaff was going on, Bismarck's wife and her daughters had come in and had seated themselves at the table. The conversation now became more general; and soon after, as it was getting late, the party broke up. With a profound bow to the ladies, and a kindly shake of the hand from our genial host, we took our departure, well pleased with our second social evening at the hospitable dwelling of "Our Chancellor."

A GOLDEN ARGOSY.

A NOVELETTE.

BY FRED. M. WHITE.

CHAPTER X.

A CYNICAL writer somewhere observes, that no man is too rich not to be glad to get a thousand pounds; and we may therefore assume the joy of an individual who possesses about as many pence, in prospect of obtaining possession of that sum. It was with this kind of joy—not, however, quite free from incredulity—that Edgar, when he met Mr Slimm by appointment at his hotel next day, listened to that gentleman's renewed asseverations that there were thousands

of pounds somewhere in that bit of paper which had been such a mystery to Edgar and his friends. Mr Slimm was this morning more enthusiastic than ever on the subject; but Edgar only smiled in reply, and eyed his cigar with the air of a connoisseur in the weed. The notion of his possessing such a sum was decidedly puzzling. His coolness attracted Mr Slimm's admiration.

"I've seen a man hanged in the middle of a comic song," that gentleman observed, with an air of studious reflection; "and I guess he was somewhat frigid. I once saw a man meet a long-lost brother whom he had given up for dead, and ask him for a borrowed sovereign, by way of salutation, and I calculate that was cool; but for pure solid stoical calmness, you are right there and blooming."

"Had I expressed any perturbation, it would have been on account of my doubting your sanity," Edgar replied. "Does it not strike you as a little strange that a casual acquaintance should discover a puzzle worth ten thousand pounds to me?"

"The unexpected always happens; and blessed things happen swiftly, as great and good things always do," said Slimm sententiously. "I haven't quite got the touch of them quotations, but the essence is about consolidated, I calculate."

"What a fund of philosophy you have!"

"You may say that," said the American with some little pride. "You see, some years ago I was down to New Orleans, and I had considerable fever—fact, I wasn't out of the house for months. Reading ain't much in my line; but I had to put up with it then. There was a good library in the house, and at first I used to pick out the plums; but that wouldn't do, so I took 'em in alphabetical order. It was a large assortment of experience to me. First, I'd get Blair on the *Grave*, and read that till I was uncertain whether I was an or'nary man or a desperate bad one. Then I would hitch on to *British Battles*, and get the taste out of my mouth. I reckon I stored up enough knowledge to ruin an or'nary digestion. I read a cookery-book once, followed by a chemistry work. I got mixed there.—But to return to our muttons, as the Mo'siaus say. I ain't joking about that letter, and that's a fact."

"But what can you know about it?" Edgar queried, becoming interested, in spite of himself and his better judgment.

"Well, you listen, and I'll tell you."

Edgar composed himself to listen, excited more than he cared to show by the impressive air of his companion, and the absence of that quaint smile which usually distinguished him; nor could the younger man fail to notice not only the change of manner but the change of voice. Mr Slimm was no longer a rough miner; and his accent, if not of refinement, was that of cultivation. Carefully choosing another cigar, and lighting it with deliberate slowness, each moment served to raise his companion's impatience, a consummation which the astute American doubtless desired.

"When I first knew your uncle," he said at length, "we were both much younger men, and, as I have before told you, I saved his life. That was in the mines. Well, after a time I lost sight of him, as is generally the case with such wanderers. After he left the mines, I did not stay long; for a kind of home-sickness came over

me, and I concluded to get away. I determined to get back and settle down; and for the first time in my life, the notion of marriage came into my head. I had not returned long when I met my fate. Mr Seaton, I will not weary you with a description of my wife. If ever there was an angel upon earth— But no matter; still, it is always a mystery to my mind what she could see in a rough uncouth fellow like me. Well, in course of time we married. I had some money then; but we decided before the year was out that it would be best to get some business or occupation for me. So, after little Amy was born, we moved West.

‘For five years we lived there in our little paradise, and two more children came to brighten our Western home. I was rapidly growing a rich man, for the country was good, and the fear of Indians kept more timorous people away. As for us, we were the best of friends; and the old chief used to come to my framehouse and nurse little Amy for hours. I shall never forget that sight. The dear little one, with her blue eyes and fair curls, sitting on that stern old man’s knee, playing with his beads, and not the least afraid; while the old fellow used to grunt and laugh and get as near a smile as it is possible for an Indian to do. But this was not to last. The old chief died, and a half-breed was appointed in his place. I never liked that man. There was something so truculent and vicious in his face, that it was impossible to like the ruffian. Well, one day he insulted my wife; she screamed, and I ran to her assistance. I took in the situation at a glance, and gave him there and then about the soundest thrashing a man ever had in his life. He went away threatening dire vengeance and looking the deadliest hate; but next morning he came and apologised in such humble terms—for the scoundrel spoke English as well as his own tongue—that I was fain to forget it. Another peaceful year passed away, and then I was summoned to New York on business. Without a single care or anxiety, I left my precious ones behind. I had done it before, and they were not the least afraid.

‘One night, when I had completed my business, and had prepared everything for my start in the morning, I was strolling aimlessly along Broadway, when I was hailed by a shout, accompanied by a hearty slap on the back. I turned round, and there I saw Charlie Morton. Mind, I am talking of over twenty years ago, and I think of him as the dashing, good-natured, weak Charlie Morton I used to know.—Well, to resume. Over a quiet smoke, he arranged to accompany me.

‘It was a glorious morning when we set out, and our hearts were light and glad, and our spirits as bright as the weather. Was not I returning to my darlings! We rode on mile after mile and day after day, till we were within twelve hours of my house. Then we found, by unmistakable signs, that the Indians were on the war-path. This was uncomfortable news for us; but still I never had an uneasy thought for the people at home.

‘When the following morning dawned, I rose with a strange presentiment of coming evil; but I shook it off, thinking it was the excitement of returning, for I had never been away from my

wife so long before. It was just about noon when I thought I saw a solitary figure in the distance. It was a strange thing to meet a stray Indian there, and judge of my surprise when I saw him making towards us! It turned out to be a deaf and dumb Sioux I employed about the clearing, and one of the same tribe we were so friendly with. By his excited state and jaded appearance, he had travelled far and hurriedly. When we came up to him, a horrible fear came over me, for then I saw he was in his war-paint. Hurriedly, I made signs to him to know if all was well at home. He shook his head sadly; and with that composure which always characterises his race, proceeded to search for something in his deerskin vest. You can imagine the eagerness with which I watched him; and when he produced a note, with what eagerness did I snatch it out of his hand! Hastily, I read it, and sank back in my saddle with a sense of almost painful relief. Apparently, all was well. The missive was half a sheet of note-paper, or, more properly, half of half a sheet of paper, containing some twelve lines, written right across the paper, with no signature or heading, saying how anxious she was for my return. I handed it to Morton with a feeling of delight and thankfulness; but, to my surprise, as he read it, he became graver and graver. At last he burst forth: “Slimm, have you any secret cipher between yourselves?”

“No,” I replied, somewhat startled at the question. “Why?”

“Because there is something more here than meets the eye. You will not mind my saying so; but the body of this note is almost cold, not to say frivolous, while words, burning words, catch my eye here and there. Can you explain it?”

“Go on!”

‘I hardly knew my own voice, it sounded so hard and strained.

“Yes,” he mused, twisting the paper in his supple fingers, “there is more here than meets the eye. This old messenger is a Sioux; that tribe is on the war-path, and the chief thoroughly understands English. An ordinary appeal for help would be worse than useless, if it fell into his hands. I perceive this paper is creased, and creased with method, and the most touching words are always confined within certain creases. Now, I will fold this longways, and turn the paper so; and then fold it thus, and thus. We are coming to the enigma. Now thus.—No; this way, and— Merciful powers!”

‘He almost reeled from his saddle, and I leant over him with straining eyes and read: “For God’s sake, hasten. On the war-path. White Cloud [the chief] has declared. . . . Hasten to us.” I stopped to see no more. Mechanically thrusting the paper into his saddle-bag, Morton urged me forward; and for some hours we rode like madmen, spurring our horses till the poor creatures almost dropped. At last, in the distance I saw what was my home—a smoking mass of ruins. In the garden lay my three children—dead; and not a quarter of a mile away my wife—also dead!”

The American here stopped, and threw himself on his face upon the couch where he had been reclining, his huge frame shaking with the

violence of his emotion. Edgar watched him with an infinite pity in his eyes for some moments, not daring to intrude upon his grief. Presently, Slimm calmed himself, and raising his face, said: 'Wall, my friend, I guess them statistics are sorter calculated to blight what the poet calls "love's young dream."—Pass the brandy,' he continued, with an air of ghastly cheerfulness.

'Why did you tell me this?' Edgar said, pained and shocked at the recital and its horrible climax.

'Well, you see I wanted to convince you of the truth of my words. I shall never allude to my story again, and I hope you never will either; though I dream of it at times.—Your wife's uncle kept that paper, and I have not the slightest doubt that the same plan has been taken as regards his wealth. I can't explain it to you at this moment; but from the description you have given of his last letter, I have not the smallest hesitation in saying that it is formed on the same lines as the fatal note I have told you of. Charlie Morton was a good fellow, but he had not the slightest imagination or originality.'

'And you really think that paper contains a secret of importance?'

'Never doubted it for a moment. Look at the whole circumstances. Fancy your meeting me; fancy my knowing your uncle; fancy—Bah! It's clear as mud.'

'The coincidences are certainly wonderful.'

'Well, they are a few.—And now,' said Mr Slimm, dropping into his most pronounced Yankee style, 'let this Adonis truss his points, freeze onto a clean biled rag, and don his plug-hat, and we'll go and interview that interestin' epistle—yes, sir.'

CHAPTER XI.

Edgar and his transatlantic companion walked along Holborn in silence. The former was deeply immersed in thought; and the American, in spite of his forced gaiety, had not yet lost all trace of his late emotion. Presently, they quitted the busy street and turned into one of the narrow lanes leading to Queen Square. Arrived at the house, they were admitted by the grimy diminutive maid-of-all-work, and slowly ascended the maze of stairs leading to Edgar's sitting-room. There were two persons who looked up as they entered—Eleanor and Jasper Felix. Edgar performed the ceremony of introduction, asking his companion if he had ever heard of the great novelist. He had.

'Yes,' said Mr Slimm impressively, 'I believe that name has been mentioned in my hearing once, if not more.—Allow me to shake hands with you, sir. I ain't given to worshipping everybody who writes a ream of nonsense and calls it a novel; but when I come across men like you, I want to remember it. We don't have many of your stamp across the Atlantic, though Nathaniel Hawthorne runs you very close.'

'Indeed, you are very complimentary,' Felix replied; 'and I take your word as flattering. I don't like flattery as a rule, especially American flattery. It is rare, in a general way. I feel as if they always want something, you know.'

'Well, I do calculate my countrymen don't

give much away for nothing. They like a *quid pro quo*; and if they can get the *quid* without the *quo*, so much the better are they pleased. But I didn't come here to discuss the idiosyncrasies of my countrymen.'

Mr Slimm seemed to possess the happy knack of making his conversation suit his company. Edgar could not help contrasting him now with the typical Yankee of the gambling-house; they hardly seemed like the same men.

'Have you got your uncle's letter?' Edgar asked his wife.

'Why?' she asked, without the slightest curiosity.

'Why? I have almost come to your way of thinking,' replied Edgar. 'Do you know, a wonderful thing has happened this morning. To make a long story short, my good friend here was an old friend of your uncle's. The story is a very sad one; but the gist of it is that the paper your uncle left so nearly resembles a tragic document which he and Mr Slimm once perused together—what is termed a cipher—that he is almost sure it is taken from the same. The coincidence is so strange, the two letters are so remarkably alike'—

'Is this really so, Mr Slimm?' Eleanor asked eagerly.

'Yes, madam,' he said quietly. 'Some day I will tell you the tale, but not now, of how I came to be in receipt of that terrible document. Your uncle was with me; and from what I know of the circumstances, they must be the same. If you don't mind me seeing it'—

Before he could finish his sentence, Eleanor was out of the room, and a silence, an uneasy silence of expectancy, fell on the group. No one spoke, and the few minutes she was away seemed like hours. Then she reappeared, and put the paper in his hands.

He merely glanced at it for a moment; indeed, he had not time to read it through before a smile began to ripple over his quaint-looking, weather-beaten face. The smile gradually grew into a laugh, and then he turned to view the anxious group with a face full of congratulation and triumph.

'Have you found it? Is it so?' burst from three people simultaneously.

He was provokingly slow in his reply, and his Yankee drawl was more painfully apparent than ever. 'Young man,' said he to Edgar, 'what might have been the nominal value of your uncle's estate—if he had any?'

'About thirty or forty thousand pounds.'

'And I promised, if you would let me see this paper, I would show you something worth ten thousand pounds. Well, you must pardon me for my little mistake. One can't always guard against mistakes, and this paper is worth four times that amount.'

For a few moments every one was aghast at the value of the discovery.

Edgar was the first to recover himself. 'You are not joking, Slimm?' he exclaimed hoarsely.

'Never a bit,' he replied with a gaiety delicately intended to cover and arouse the emotion of the others. 'There it is on the face of the paper, as plainly as possible—the fateful words staring me in the face. You could see them yourselves, if you only knew how.'

'Wonderful!' exclaimed Felix. 'And that simple paper contains a secret worth all that money?'

'Why, certainly. Not only that, but where it is, and the exact spot in which it is concealed. Only to think—a starving, desperate woman dragging such a secret as that about London; and only to think of a single moment preventing it being buried in the Thames. Wonderful, wonderful!'

'Perhaps you will disclose it to us,' said Edgar, impatient at this philosophical tirade.

'No!' Eleanor put in resolutely—'no, Edgar! I do not think it would be fair. Considering the time and trouble Mr Carver has given to the matter, it would only be right for him to know at the same time. The dear old gentleman has been so enthusiastic throughout, and so kind, that I should feel disappointed if he did not hear the secret disclosed when we are all together.'

'How thoughtful you are, Mrs Seaton!' remarked Felix with great admiration. 'Of course you are right. The old fellow will be delighted beyond measure, and will fancy he has a hand in the matter himself.'

'I do not see why we should wait for that,' Edgar grumbled.

'Impatient boy!' said Eleanor with a charming smile. 'Talk about curiosity in woman, indeed!'

'All right,' he replied laughingly, his brow clearing at one glance from his wife. 'I suppose we must wait. I do not see, however, what is to prevent us starting to see him at once. Probably, you won't be more than an hour putting on your bonnet, Nelly?'

'I shall be with you in five minutes;' and, singular to relate, she was.

'Curiosity,' remarked Edgar, 'is a great stimulus, even to women.'

Arrived at Bedford Row, they found Mr Carver at his office, and fortunately disengaged. It did not take that astute gentleman long to perceive, from the faces of his visitors, that something very great and very fortunate had happened.

'Well, good people,' he said, cheerfully rubbing his head with considerable vigour, 'what news? Not particularly bad, by the look of you.'

Edgar stated the case briefly, and at the beginning of his narrative it was plain to see that the worthy solicitor was somewhat disappointed; but when he learned they were nearly as much in the dark as he, he resumed his usual rubicund aspect.

'Dear, dear! how fortunate. Wonderful, wonderful!' he exclaimed, hopping about excitedly. 'Never heard such a thing in my life—never, and thirty years in practice too. Quite a hero, Edgar.'

'No, sir,' Edgar put in modestly. 'Mr Slimm is the hero. Had it not been for him, we could never have discovered the hidden mine. Talk about Aladdin's lamp!'

'And so you knew my poor client?' broke in Mr Carver, addressing Slimm. 'What a fine fellow he was in those days! I suppose you showed him the secret of the cipher?'

'Wall, no, stranger,' replied the American, the old Adam cropping out again strongly. 'He

guessed it by instinct, if it wasn't something higher'n that. I did not know it myself, though it was sent to me by one very dear to me, to warn me of danger. You see, it might have come into the hands of an enemy who understood English, and it was just a desperate chance. It came a trifle late to save my peace of mind,' he continued naturally and bitterly, 'and I shall never forget it. The sight of that piece of paper in that lady's hands,' pointing to the important document, 'gave me a touch of the old feeling when I first saw it.'

'Poor fellow, poor fellow! Pray, don't distress yourself upon our account. A mere explanation.'—

'I'd almost forgotten,' replied Mr Slimm, taking the paper from Eleanor's hands. 'If you will be good enough to listen, I will explain it.'

They drew close round the table, and he proceeded to explain.

'The paper I hold in my hand,' said the American, 'is filled with writing, commencing at the top of the paper, without anything of a margin, and ending in the same manner. The paper, you perceive, is ruled with dotted lines, which makes the task of deciphering the secret all the easier. It has five dotted perpendicular lines at equal distances; and four horizontal, not so equal in distance. These are guide-lines. Now, I will take the letter and fold it along the centre dotted line from top to bottom, with the writing inside—so. Then from the second dotted line, counting from the right-hand side, I fold it backwards, showing the writing—thus. Then I fold the fourth dotted line from the right hand over the writing. The first part is accomplished by turning the narrow slip of writing between the fifth line and the left-hand side back thus; and then you see this. The rest is simple. Fold the slip in two, keeping the writing inside; then turn the bottom portion back and fold it across the lower dotted line, and the puzzle is complete. Or there is yet a simpler way. In each corner of the paper there are a few words inclosed by the dotted lines. Begin at the top at the word "Darling," then across the line to the words "Nelly, in." Then the next line, which is all inclosed at the top in the corner squares. Read the same way at the bottom corner squares; and see the result. You are puzzled by the folding, I see; but try the other way. Here,' he said, handing the paper to Nelly; 'please read aloud what you can make of it.'

Following his instructions, Nelly made out the words thus:

*Darling Nelly, in
the garden under the
Niobe you will
find my money.*

The murder was out! The mystery which had puzzled every one was explained; and after all, it was so simple! The simplicity of the affair was its greatest safeguard. It was so simple, so particularly devoid of intricacy, that it had baffled them all. Something bewildering and elaborate they had expected, but nothing like this. Mr Carver, notwithstanding his joy, looked inexpressibly foolish. Edgar gave way to his emotion in mirth. 'O shade of Edgar Allan Poe,

what a climax!' he exclaimed. 'Was it for this our worthy friend waded through the abstruse philosophy of *The Purloined Letter* and the intricacies of *The Gold Bug*? Was it for this that *The Murders in the Rue Morgue* and *The Mystery of Marie Roget* were committed to memory?'

'Be quiet, you young jackanapes!' exclaimed Mr Carver testily; and then, seeing the ludicrous side of the matter, he joined in the younger man's mirth with equal heartiness.

'But why,' said Eleanor, still serious, and dwelling upon the mystery—'why did not uncle fold the letter in the way he wished it to be read?'

'Well, madam,' Mr Slimm explained, 'you see in that case the letter would have adapted itself to the folds so readily, that, had it fallen into a stranger's hand, he would have discovered the secret at once. Your uncle must have remembered the letter he founded his upon, and how easily he discovered that. By folding this paper in the ordinary way, improper curiosity was baffled.'

'Yes, I suppose so,' Eleanor mused. 'Anyway, thank heaven, we have solved the mystery, and we are free at last!'

'Don't look so serious, darling,' Edgar said brightly. 'It is all ours now, to do what we like with. How happy we shall be!'

'Ahem!' coughed Mr Bates ominously, the only remark which, by the way, he had made during the scene.

'Bless me, Bates!' ejaculated Mr Carver in his abrupt way. 'Really, I had quite forgotten you.—Shake hands, Bates! Let me shake hands with my future partner.'

'Begging your pardon, sir, I think not. You'—reproachfully—'seem to have forgotten the will. Mr Morton's last testament left this property to Miss Wakefield—this money is part of his estate.'

Mr Carver groaned and sank back in his chair. It was too true. Mr Morton's last will devised his estate to Miss Wakefield, and this treasure was hers beyond the shadow of a doubt.

THE FLOATING ISLAND ON DERWENTWATER.

MR WARD in his book on the *Geology of the English Lake District*, while describing some of the effects that various rock formations have on scenery, has stated that the mountains surrounding Lake Derwentwater are not only geologically interesting, but are very beautiful. To quote his own words. He says: 'If we take our stand upon Friar's Crag, jutting out into Derwentwater, we have before us one of the fairest views that England can give. The lake, studded with wooded islets, and surrounded by mountains of varied form and outline. Upon the west side, the mountains, most exquisitely grouped together, have soft outlines and smooth and grassy slopes, sometimes meeting below to form, as in Newlands Vale, an inverted arch of marvellous elegance and grace. These are of Skiddaw slate, which mostly weathers away in small flakes or pencil-like pieces, giving rise to a clayey and shaly wash at the base of the hills. Upon the east side of

the lake and at its head, the case is otherwise; the mountains have generally rough and hummocky outlines and steep and craggy sides; whilst their waste lies below in the shape of rough tumbled masses, like ruins of a giant castle. These consist of rocks belonging to the volcanic series, which are hard, massive, and well jointed. Thus we have presented to us two independent types of scenery, formed by very distinct classes of rock.'

Southey, in a letter to Coleridge, describing the view from his house (Greta Hall), compared the mountains of the first type above mentioned to the 'tents of a camp of giants;' whilst it is between a rift in the rocks of the latter, or volcanic series, that the Watendlath burn rushes down and forms the picturesque Falls of Lodore.

But, apart from the varied charms of scenery surrounding Derwentwater, and the many historical reminiscences connected with the immediate neighbourhood, the lake has a phenomenon of its own in the so-called Floating Island. The visitor to Keswick may see at any time, and if such be his desire, may row round and thoroughly inspect four islands on the lake; but this one, through its somewhat eccentric movements, is not so easily examined. In fact, it only exists as an island for a few weeks' duration, and then generally at intervals of several years. The last time it was visible was in 1884, when it was noticed about the middle of August; and disappeared during the first week in October. It is doubtful whether all the causes of this occurrence are yet known; for, on its last appearance, considerable interest was taken in it by scientific men, and several experiments were made with a view of ascertaining its substance, both solid and gaseous. Certain it is that, even in these days of accurate information and universal reading, considerable misconception must exist on the subject. For instance, an article appeared in this *Journal* for August 1874, in which it was stated that 'until it was driven ashore in a gale, a few years ago, there used to be an island of this kind' [the writer had previously spoken of a floating island on a Swedish lake, which occasionally sank below the surface and reappeared] 'on Derwentwater, Cumberland. . . . When a stick or fishing-rod was driven through it, a jet of water would spurt up from the hole; thus indicating that some spring or current was pressing against it from below; and this was probably the force which kept it at the surface, and being of an intermittent character, allowed it at times to sink to the bottom.' This writer's idea was, that a waterfall, which he mentions as 'throwing itself into the lake,' but is in reality at least a quarter of a mile off, caused a current, which, according to its force, was able to buoy the island up by its pressure. This fallacious theory is mentioned in one or two guide-books to Keswick, one stating that, 'the guides, the older and more intelligent ones, will tell you of a little stream that gets lost in the ground.' This 'little stream' is the Catgill Beck, which, in its passage from the hills, forms the waterfall spoken of in the previous quotation. The 'driven ashore in a gale' statement is easily refuted by the fact that the island made its appearance two years after in the same place as on its previous emergences, namely, about a

hundred and fifty yards from the shore at the south-eastern corner of the lake.

The *Daily News* of August 20, 1884, contained a short leading article on the subject, in which, after describing the floating gardens of the ancient Mexicans, the writer continues: 'This at Derwentwater seems to be merely an accidental accretion of material round some tree-trunk or something of the kind, which, as in the larger island just alluded to [an American one], has become in some way anchored to the bed of the lake, probably at that point not very deep.'

The writers of the two articles above quoted could never have examined, and probably had never even seen the island in question.

A frequent source of error is the notion people are liable to carry away who have only seen it from the shore. Many see it, probably for the first and only time, from the top of a stagecoach, on their way to Buttermere or on some other favourite excursion. Just previously, the driver has perhaps directed their attention, by a jerk of his whip over his left shoulder, to Raven's Crag. Now, there is a gap in the trees on the other side, and a glimpse of the lake is caught. 'Floating Island,' laconically remarks Jehu to the box-seat occupants, and again points his whip, but this time to the right towards the lake. 'Where? where?' ask the others behind. 'There, there—don't you see?' and on rolls the coach, some wondering if that little patch of green were it; others, failing to see anything, refer to their guide-books or companions as to what object of interest must next be looked for. *Lodore Hotel* comes into view, and the minds of the hurried tourists are once more engaged in a hasty examination of the Falls. So the day wears on, and they have seen the Floating Island. But how, and how much? Even the name itself may cause misapprehension, although it would be difficult to give the object a more definite appellation.

The island is not mentioned either by Hutchinson or Nicolson and Burns in their *Histories of Cumberland*, published towards the end of last century. In an interesting account, however, of *A Fortnight's Ramble to the Lakes*, by Jos. Budworth, F.S.A., published 1795, a short reference is made to it. After speaking of the 'stormy breakers' on the lake, caused by 'a bottom wind,' he goes on to say: 'It is said Keswick Lake often wears this appearance a day or two previous to a storm; and when violently agitated at the bottom, an island arises, and remains upon the surface some time. . . . The grass and the moss are as green as a meadow, which soon unite and become consistent. There are very few people in the neighbourhood who have not been upon it.' It is probably to Jonathan Ottery, a native of Keswick, and a very careful observer, that we owe the first really authentic account of the island. In a paper read before the Manchester Literary and Philosophical Society, and published in their *Transactions* for the year 1819, he gives a graphic description of it, and mentions a newspaper correspondence having appeared in the *Carlisle Journal* some years previous, in which two or three different theories were propounded by various writers as to the cause of its emergence. At the end of this Memoir, a note from John Dalton—the author of the Atomic Theory, and a native of Cumberland, although at this time

he had resided in Manchester for some years—explains, that 'being at Keswick in 1815, Mr Ottery and I procured a small quantity of the gas [from the island], which I found to consist of equal parts of carburetted hydrogen and azotic gases, with about six per cent. of carbonic acid.' It will be seen from the above that the island had not escaped the observation of men of science very early in the present century.

From a distance, it looks like a grass plot floating on the lake. It is never more than six inches above the water, but varies considerably in area in different years. On its last emergence, the exposed surface was about fifty yards by twelve; but in 1842 it was upwards of ninety yards long by twenty broad. It generally makes its appearance in July, August, or September, and disappears towards the end of the last month. In 1831, however, it came to the top on the tenth of June, and remained exposed until the twenty-fourth of September—the longest period ever remembered. It has never been seen except in the summer or autumn months, and then only after periods of excessive drought and warm weather; but whether its origin is owing to the lowness of the water in the lake, or to the high temperature, or to a combination of both causes, is still an open question.

The bed of the lake where the island appears consists of what, were there no lake over it, would be called a peat-moss, which extends over several acres. When the water is calm, dark-brown patches may be seen over the whole of this area, indicating rents or fissures. The depth of water is very uniform here, varying from six to eight feet when the lake is at an average height. The appearance of the island is caused by a portion of this peat-moss rising, not bodily, as in a detached mass, but like a huge blister. It is this peculiar manner of rising that upsets the preconceived notions of many visitors, leading some to suppose that the surface of the lake having become lowered, through drought or other causes, a portion of its bed has been laid bare. Although this peat-moss is capable of considerable distention, owing to the elasticity of its component parts, it not unfrequently occurs that a rupture takes place whilst rising to the surface. In such cases, two islands are sometimes formed, but more frequently one part sinks, when a fairly accurate idea may be formed of the thickness of the peat-moss or substance of the island. If the second portion, or part that has remained at the surface, on resuming its position at the bottom, does not exactly fill the same space as before, a gap is caused, which accounts for the apparent dark patches before mentioned.

The aquatic plants growing on the bed of this portion of the lake are, when living, all specifically lighter than water, which may easily be proved by detaching any of them from the bottom, when they will be found to rise to the surface. They grow, wither, and decay, their roots matting together amidst the finely divided turf, itself the remains of various mosses, producing what Ottery aptly calls a 'congeries of weeds.' The thickness of this mass is about six feet, and rests upon a bed of clay. After a continuance of high temperature, the air and gas—of which there is always a considerable amount in such substances—expand. This expansion is sufficient to reduce the weight

of the whole slightly below an equal volume of water. The water insinuates itself between the peat-moss and the bed of clay on which it rests, but to which it is in no way attached, owing to the roots not being able to penetrate it. The mass slowly rises, the lighter portion gradually dragging itself to the surface, although, as has been previously stated, not absolutely detaching itself from the rest. After appearing above the level of the water, the weeds make vigorous growth, which tends to reduce temporarily the specific gravity of the whole still more, and to give that emerald hue to the exposed part which made Budworth describe it as being 'as green as a meadow.' If, through heavy rainfall, the water-level of the lake be raised, the island rises and falls with it. Should low temperature, however, supervene, the mass loses its buoyancy, and slowly disappears; once more to sink into obscurity and become part of the bed of the lake, after having, for a butterfly existence, basked under the warm August sun as the Floating Island.

POPULAR LEGAL FALLACIES.*

BY AN EXPERIENCED PRACTITIONER.

THE RIGHTS OF THE ELDEST SON AND OTHER CHILDREN OF AN INTESTATE OWNER OF REAL AND PERSONAL ESTATE.

MANY persons believe that the eldest son of a man who has died without leaving a will, or who in other words dies intestate, is entitled to the whole of the property, both real and personal, left by his deceased parent; but this is an error so far as relates to the personal estate, and in some cases also in respect of the real estate. By the common law, which had its origin in feudal times, the eldest son was entitled to succeed to the property of his deceased father; and might be called upon to perform the military and other duties which were due and accustomed to be paid in respect of such property to the immediate feudal superior. Hence the origin of what is often spoken of as an iniquitous system of favouritism arbitrarily established by law. When there were no standing armies, and the king upon the throne for the time being had to depend upon the military services of the barons who had received lands upon condition of performing such services, while the barons in turn had to depend upon the persons to whom they had granted parts of their lands upon similar conditions, it was of great importance that there should always be a male possessor of those lands. If he were an 'infant' and incapable of bearing arms, a relative was appointed guardian of his person and estate during his minority, and upon this guardian devolved the duties appertaining to the estate. But in those days, tenancies for years and other smaller interests in lands were not held as of much account, being of small value, and subject to being forfeited or declared void on various pretences; whence arises the apparent anomaly,

that leasehold property is personal estate, whatever may be its value, and therefore distributable among all the children of an intestate, as will be explained more fully. A third class of property is 'copyhold,' which is real estate, but in respect of which the feudal services were of a different description. Being useful only, and not military, these services were considered as inferior in dignity and less honourable than the duties attached to the possession of freehold property. The subject of tenures and services is full of interest, but the exigences of space compel us to turn away from the tempting theme. It was, however, necessary to refer thus briefly to the origin of the present rules of law, in order to make intelligible the reasons for the distinctions which still exist.

We have mentioned the common-law rule of descent of land, and must note two exceptions to the general rule. By the custom of 'borough English,' which exists at Maldon in Essex, in the city of Gloucester, and other places, the youngest instead of the eldest son inherits his father's freeholds in case of intestacy. And by the custom of 'gavelkind,' which still applies to most of the land in Kent, although some has been dis-gavelled by private Acts of Parliament, the freeholds of an intestate are divisible among all the sons of the deceased in equal shares.

Leaving these customs aside, we propose to consider the effect of the intestacy of an owner of freehold and other property who leaves a family of children surviving him.

In such a case, the widow (if any) would be entitled to receive one-third of the rents of the freeholds for her life, that being a provision made for her by the law under the name of dower. Dower attaches to all the freehold lands and hereditaments of which her deceased husband was the actual owner at the time of his decease, either in fee-simple or fee-tail; except, in the latter case, if the entail were limited to the children of the first wife, the second wife would not be dowerable out of the estate. But this provision, mercifully made by the law for the widow of a man who had so far neglected the duty of a husband as to omit to provide for her by his will, may be barred in a very peculiar manner. The right of a widow to dower will be barred if in the conveyance to her husband, or any deed subsequently executed by him, there should be a declaration that she is not to be entitled to dower out of the property to which such conveyance or other deed relates. In this way many widows have been deprived of dower without the knowledge of their husbands. If the declaration be contained in the conveyance, the execution thereof by the husband is not necessary, as he takes the property subject to the contents of such conveyance. If in any other deed, probably he signs, seals, and delivers it without taking the trouble to read its contents, trusting to his solicitor to see that the documents are all right. There cannot be any possible advantage in inserting the declaration in question, and, in our opinion, any solicitor who inserts it without express instructions to do so—which are never given—is guilty of a grave dereliction of duty towards his client.

Subject to the right of dower, if not barred, and to any existing mortgages or other charges, the freehold property of an intestate becomes the

* It should be understood that this series of articles deals mainly with English as apart from Scotch law.

property of his eldest son immediately on the death; and the rents are apportionable according to the ownership. The proportion of the current rent down to the actual date of the decease of the former owner forms part of his personal estate, as well as all arrears of rent then remaining unpaid. When the heir first receives any rent, he pays to his father's executors so much as belongs to them, and retains the remainder for his own use, although he must satisfy prior charges thereout. Thus, if the father died in the middle of a half-year, the year's rents being one thousand pounds, there being a mortgage of ten thousand pounds at four per centum per annum, and the widow being dowable, then, upon receipt of the first half-year's rent, five hundred pounds, the mortgagees would claim two hundred pounds, the executors one hundred and fifty, the widow fifty, and the heir would have one hundred for his own benefit. The next half-year, the mortgagees would again take two hundred pounds, the widow one hundred, and the heir two hundred pounds. This is how the practical working of such a case is generally managed; but strictly, the widow might have one-third of the lands set apart for her own use during her life, in satisfaction of her right to dower. This, however, is seldom done, although it used to be the ordinary course.

Copyhold property is more uncertain in its incidents than freehold, being regulated entirely by the custom of each manor of which the property is holden. The three modes of descent mentioned above may perhaps be considered to divide the manors in the kingdom almost equally amongst them. There is an equal diversity in respect of free-bench, the copyhold equivalent for dower. In a few manors, the widow is entitled to the whole of the rents so long as she remains a widow; in others, she has half; and in others, two-thirds; while in the remainder, the proportion is the same as the dower payable out of freeholds, one-third; although the duration of the allowance frequently differs, not being usually for life, as dower, but during widowhood—in some manors the additional obligation of chastity being imposed. The heir, whether the eldest or the youngest son, is subjected to the same obligations as in respect of freehold; and if the gavelkind custom applies, each share on a further intestacy descends to the heirs of the co-heir. In this way has been illustrated the disadvantage of any rule of law which makes real estate divisible. We knew a small copyhold estate consisting of a cottage and garden, which became by successive intestacies subdivided into shares, some of which were worth no more than two shillings per year each. Only those who have had practical acquaintance with the management of land can appreciate the inconvenience arising from this minute subdivision.

We have already said that leasehold property is personal estate; and it only remains to explain the process of distributing the personal estate of an intestate. Assuming that the deceased was a widower who left seven grown-up children, and who was the owner of leasehold houses, money on mortgage, shares in various railway and other joint-stock companies, also household furniture and other movable effects—any one or more (not exceeding three) of the children might apply for letters of administration of the personal

estate and effects of the deceased; two sureties being required to enter into a bond for the due administration of the personalty. The administrator, when appointed, would have full power to sell the houses, shares, furniture, &c., and to call in the mortgage moneys. Out of the moneys to be produced thereby, and any other money in the bank, in the house, or elsewhere, and of any debts collected and got in, either by means of actions or otherwise, the administrator would first pay the funeral expenses and costs of administration, including sale expenses; next, all debts which were owing by the intestate at the time of his decease; and would then divide the clear residue among all the children of the deceased in equal shares. If any child had died leaving lawful issue, the share which he would have taken if living would be divided equally amongst his issue. In either case, no distinction would be made in respect of age or sex. The eldest son would take the share which fell to him, within the rule of distributions, whether he had inherited any real estate from his father or not. If the intestate left a widow, she would be entitled to letters of administration, and to retain one-third of the residue for her own benefit before the division of the remainder amongst the children, &c.

Formerly, the shares of personal estate which passed to children of the deceased were chargeable with legacy-duty at the rate of one per cent.; but this does not apply to intestacies in respect of which letters of administration have been granted on or since the 1st of June 1881, and on which an increased rate of probate duty has been paid. This, however, does not affect the succession duty in respect of real estate, which is still payable.

THE MOTHER'S VIGIL.

BY HUGH CONWAY.

A WAKEFUL night with stealthy tread
O'er weary day had crept,
As near her dying infant's bed
A mother watched and wept.
She saw the dews of death o'erspread
That brow so white and fair,
And bowing down her aching head,
She breathed a fervent prayer:

'O Thou,' she cried, 'a mother's love
Hast known—a mother's grief—
Bend down from starry heights above,
And send my heart relief.
Sweet lips that smiled are drawn in pain,
Yet rest his life may keep,
And give him to my arms again:
Oh, let my baby sleep!'

When sickly dawn a gleam had cast
Of light on night's black pall,
Through gates of heaven in mercy past
An answer to her call.
On sombre wings, through gloomy skies,
Death's angel darkly swept—
He softly kissed those troubled eyes,
And lo! the infant slept.

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